

LUTHERAN DAY ON THE HILL

A STRONG AND SUPPORTED MEDICAID PROGRAM

“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

—Galatians 6:2

In times of adversity, we must stand together as one united Iowa community. When one of us thrives, all of us are stronger because of it.

Iowa families who receive Medicaid must have reliable access to mental and behavioral healthcare. When there are gaps in coverage, children and families suffer.

LSI assists more than 3,000 clients every year who depend on Medicaid for care. We see firsthand how critical Medicaid is to Iowans. But since 2016, when three Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) began overseeing Iowa’s Medicaid program, we have witnessed families struggling to adapt to changes made by this transition. We are committed to working with the Iowa Department of Human Services to ensure all Iowans have access to a continuum of care.

- Administrative complexities create barriers to quality, timely care, including delays in services for the most vulnerable children.
- Barriers include authorization denials for children in need of residential treatment, decreased lengths of stay for children with severe psychiatric needs, and lower levels of care for people with disabilities who rely on services to be healthy and as independent as possible.
- MCO billing complexities have resulted in unnecessary burdens and hundreds of thousands of dollars of unpaid claims for providers like LSI.
- The Medicaid marketplace is unstable across Iowa. One MCO is no longer accepting new members, and another is dropping out of Iowa, leaving few options for Iowans.

As people of faith, it is crucial that we speak as one voice. The Iowa legislature must provide appropriate oversight of the MCOs to support the thousands of community members who rely on Medicaid every day.



MICHELLE’S STORY

When Michelle learned she would need a wheelchair, she couldn’t motivate herself to get out of bed in the mornings. She didn’t want to leave her home, and she felt disconnected. Through LSI’s Services for People with Disabilities, Michelle found her independence, became employed, and was thriving in her community. But due to documentation errors in the new MCO system, Michelle’s access to service was cut. Her mental health spiraled out of control and she ended up in a psychiatric unit. Not only did the error drastically impact Michelle’s lifestyle, but her stay in the psychiatric unit cost Iowa taxpayers \$7,000 each week, as opposed to \$100 each week as an LSI client.



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